

## Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-06 /017 R

66602

DRAFTED BY: IO/HDC:EPNOZIGLIA  
APPROVED BY: IO/HDC:EPNOZIGLIA  
EA/RA:WGALLAGHER (INFO)

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R 281500Z JUL 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 174694

FOLLOWING REPEAT SECSTATE SENT ACTION RANGOON, JULY 24:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 174694

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, BM

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM

REFS: A) RANGOON 0800, B) RANGOON 1410, C) RANGOON 1649,  
D) RANGOON 1719, E) RANGOON 1829, F) STATE 137535

1. SUMMARY: DESPITE OUR HOPES OF OBTAINING DETAILED NEEDS AND GENERAL STRATEGY OF GUB FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL, MOST CONTACTS WITH COL. AUNG HTAY'S PARTY WERE UNPRODUCTIVE. WHILE THE GROUP WAS SHOWN OR HAD EXPLAINED MANY TYPES OF EQUIPMENT THEY SPECIFICALLY ASKED ONLY WHEN THE F-27, NIGHT VISION DEVICES AND RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE COULD BE DELIVERED AND WERE GIVEN OUR BEST ESTIMATES. AMBASSAJOR VANCE SUGGESTED, THAT AS MORE SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT SUPPORT IS CONSIDERED, THAT US TECHNICAL PERSONNEL VISIT BURMA FOR DISCUSSIONS. HERBICIDES AND APPROPRIATE DELIVERY SYSTEMS, WERE ALSO EXPLORED, BUT NO DECISION REACHED. THE BURMESE STATED THEY WOULD BE MAKING A FULL REPORT TO THEIR SUPERIORS AND WOULD CONTACT THE EMBASSY REGARDING FURTHER ASSISTANCE. BEYOND THE PACKAGE ALREADY DISCUSSED, WE BELIEVE CONFIDENTIAL

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FURTHER ASSISTANCE SHOULD AWAIT SUCCESSFUL USE OF EQUIPMENT PROVIDED OR PROMISED PLUS BASIC KNOWLEDGE OF BURMESE NARCOTICS CONTROL PLANS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE RETICENCE OF COL. AUNG HTAY, COL. SOE MYINT, AND

MAJOR TIN MAUNG TO DISCUSS BURMESE STRATEGY OR PLANS FOR OPIUM ERADICATION CHARACTERIZED THEIR VISIT. WE REALIZE THAT THIS MAY WELL HAVE BEEN THE RESULT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS, NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OR A SHORT LEASH FROM COL. TIN OO. NEVERTHELESS, THE TRIP ESCORTS REPORTED GREAT DIFFICULTY IN ENGAGING THE BURMESE OFFICERS IN DETAILED DISCUSSIONS OF PROJECTED GUB ANTI-NARCOTICS OPERATIONS. THE ONLY INDEPTH DISCUSSIONS OF A SUBSTANTIVE NATURE TOOK PLACE ON A PERSONAL ONE-TO-ONE BASIS. AS A RESULT, WE FOUND OURSELVES UNABLE TO ASSESS GUB NEEDS AND UTILIZATION CAPABILITIES, LET ALONE TAILOR PROJECTED COMMODITY SUPPORT TO SUCH CRITERIA.

3. AT THE TRIP DEBRIEFING JULY 11, COL. AUNG HTAY DECLINED TO GO BEYOND STATING THE TRIP WAS IMPRESSIVE AND BENEFICIAL AND THAT HE WOULD MAKE A FULL REPORT TO HIS SUPERIORS ON WHAT HE HAD SEEN IN THE UNITED STATES. HE DID NOT OFFER ANY COMMENTS AS TO WHAT ASPECTS OF TRIP HE BELIEVED TO BE THE MOST USEFUL OR WHAT PORTIONS OF THE VISIT HE THOUGHT COULD BE DELETED. HOWEVER, WE ATTRIBUTE THE GROUP'S DEPARTURE FROM MEXICO ONE DAY EARLY TO THEIR APPARENT BELIEF THAT CONDITIONS IN MEXICO WERE NOT APPLICABLE TO BURMA.

4. DURING HIS FAREWELL CALL ON AMBASSADOR VANCE, COL. AUNG HTAY ASKED WHAT THE DELIVERY TIMES WOULD BE ON AN F-27 AIRCRAFT, COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE (APPROVED IN REFTEL F) AND NIGHT VISION DEVICES. (NO OTHER ITEMS WERE SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED BY AUNG HTAY.)

5. AMBASSADOR VANCE REPLIED THAT WE HAD BEEN ABLE TO LOCATE A FOKKER F-27 IN AMSTERDAM BUT AVAILABILITY WOULD DEPEND ON NEEDED OVERHAUL AND OUR ABILITY TO UPGRADE DART-CONFIDENTIAL

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6 ENGINES TO DART-7'S SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THE UBA FLEET. (F-27'S BUILT BY FAIRCHILD IN USA LACK PARTS COMPATIBILITY WITH THE FOKKER F-27'S CURRENTLY IN USE BY UBA.)

6. WE ESTIMATED THE COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE COULD BE OBTAINED WITHIN SEVEN MONTHS, AND THAT NIGHT VISION DEVICES MIGHT REQUIRE 9-12 MONTHS. WE INDICATED, HOWEVER, THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY OF ACQUIRING SURPLUS US ARMY DEVICES, WHICH COULD SPEED DELIVERY, OR OF ARRANGING DELIVERIES IN STAGES.

7. AMBASSADOR VANCE STATED THAT AS THE BURMESE ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN PROGRESSED, AND AS WE CONSIDERED THE ADVISABILITY OF MORE SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT SUPPORT, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO SEND USG TECHNICAL EXPERTS TO RANGOON

FOR DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ON BURMESE COMMODITY NEEDS. (THE AMBASSADOR SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED RUDY HALL FOR SUCH AN ASSIGNMENT.) AUNG HTAY REPLIED THAT HE WOULD PASS ON THE AMBASSADOR'S SUGGESTION TO HIS SUPERIORS.

8. THE BURMESE REPEATEDLY INDICATED THE GUB CONSIDERED HERBICIDES A VALUABLE TOOL IN OPIUM ERADICATION. WE ADVISED AUNG HTAY THAT, AT GUB REQUEST, WE COULD SUBSTITUTE AN APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF LIGHT OBSERVATION HELICOPTERS SUITABLE FOR HERBICIDE SPRAYING IN LIEU OF THE NEXT SIX BELL 205 HELICOPTERS. FYI: WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED ONE LIGHT OBSERVATION HELICOPTER MANUFACTURER HAS SIXTEEN AVAILABLE PRODUCTION LINE SLOTS BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF 1975. BELL HAS ALSO SAID IT COULD PROVIDE TWO BELL 205 HELICOPTERS PER MONTH BEGINNING IN JANUARY. END FYI. AUNG HTAY STATED HE WOULD ADVISE EMBASSY RANGOON OF GUB WISHES IN THIS REGARD.

GOM NO DECISIONS WERE REACHED CONCERNING PROPER HERBICIDE TO USE ON POPPIES, OR ON WHETHER USG COULD SUPPLY HERBICIDE UNDER NARCOTICS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. WE POINTED OUT SEVERAL TIMES THAT WHILE WE COULD DISCUSS AND DEMONSTRATE THE PROPERTIES OF VARIOUS HERBICIDES OR WEEDKILLERS, THAT DID NOT MEAN WE WOULD SUPPLY THEM. ALL HERBICIDES DISCUSSED ARE AVAILABLE ON THE COMMERCIAL MARKET. THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ESTIMATED COST OF CHEMICALS TO SPRAY BURMA'S TOTAL POPPY ACREAGE RANGES UP TO \$800,000. SEVERAL COMPOUNDS WERE DISCUSSED WITH THE BURMESE GROUP, AND MANUALS DESCRIBING THE PROPERTIES OF GLYPHOSATE AND PARAQUAT WERE GIVEN THEM. WE PLAN TO INVESTIGATE THE USE OF OTHER LESS COSTLY AND LESS RESTRICTIVE COMPOUNDS AS WELL.

10. THE BURMESE VISITORS AT VARIOUS TIMES INDICATED THEIR INTENTION TO COMMIT AIRBORNE AND GROUND TROOPS TO ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS IN SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER NUMBERS THAN WE PREVIOUSLY HAD ESTIMATED. THIS MAY EXPLAIN THE GUB REQUEST FOR 10 HAND-HELD NIGHT VISION DEVICES, AND 100 WEAPON-MOUNTED DEVICES. FYI: OUR CURRENT COST ESTIMATES ARE 1) \$3857 FOR A MK 303A STAR-TRON, WITH 135 MM LENS, A G-3 RIFLE ADAPTER MOUNT, SECURE NO-REFLECTION EYE PIECE, ILLUMINATED RECTICLE PROJECTOR, AND DAYLIGHT FILTER FOR TRAINING PURPOSES; 2) \$3820 FOR MK 303A STAR-TRON, WITH 170 MM LENS, BIOCLAR VIEWER, HEAVY-DUTY TRIPOD AND PISTOL GRIP FOR TRAIL WATCH VIEWING OF 800-1000 METERS; 3) \$8,013 FOR STAR-TRON WITH 410 MM LENS FOR EXCEPTIONALLY LONG-RANGE VIEWING, LINE OF SIGHT TO HORIZON, FOR ESPECIALLY OPEN TERRAIN. END FYI.

11. THE BURMESE OFFICERS ASSURED US THEY WOULD BE MAKING

A FULL REPORT TO THEIR SUPERIORS ON HOW VARIOUS EQUIPMENT ITEMS COULD BE UTILIZED IN THE GUB NARCOTICS ERADICATION CAMPAIGN. WE STATED WE WOULD BE WILLING -- EITHER THROUGH AN EMBASSY "EXPERTS GROUP" OR VISITING US TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVES -- TO DISCUSS FURTHER US COMMODITY SUPPORT FOR BURMESE NARCOTICS ACTIVITIES. WHILE ADMITTEDLY HANDICAPPED BY THE BURMESE OFFICERS' LACK OF CANDOR ON GUB ERADICATION PLANS, WE ARE BASICALLY AGREED THAT THE PROVISION OF THE FLIR INFRAREDSYSTEM AND MULTI-SPECTRAL PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION CAPABILITY ARE NOT REQUIRED AT THIS TIME. GIVEN THE WIDESPREAD, OPEN PLANTING OF POPPIES, PLUS NUMEROUS REFINERIES AND WELL KNOWN CARAVAN ROUTES, GIB WOULD NOT APPEAR CURRENTLY TO NEED SUCH SOPHISTICATED GEAR, DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO DETECT CLANDESTINE ACTIVITY. WHEN PRODUCERS AND TRAFFICKERS TAKE SUBSTANTIAL STEPS TO AVOID DETECTION, WE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE PREPARED TO RECONSIDER SUPPLY OF CONFIDENTIAL

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FLIR AND MULTI-SPECTRAL CAPABILITY.

12. WE BELIEVE THAT FURTHER DISCUSSIONS CENTERING ON NARCOTICS ASSISTANCE, BEYOND THAT MENTIONED IN PARA 3, 5, 6, 7, AND 8 SHOULD AWAIT A FRANK EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON GUB ERADICATION PLANS, AS WELL AS THE SUCCESSFUL USE OF THE EQUIPMENT ALREADY PROVIDED OR PROMISED. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE FAVORABLE BELL PRODUCTION AVAILABILITY PROJECTIONS (PARA 8) INDICATE THAT THERE IS NO NEED TO RELAX THE MUTUALLY AGREED REQUIREMENT THAT THE DECISION TO PROVIDE MORE HELICOPTERS AFTER THE FIRST SIX SHOULD DEPEND ON THE EXISTENCE OF SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE THAT THE FIRST SIX HAVE BEEN WELL USED (RANGOON 1829). MAINTAINING THE SPIRIT AS WELL AS THE LETTER OF THIS BASIC REQUIREMENT STRENGTHENS OUR POSITION WITH RESPECT TO POSSIBLE DOMESTIC AND CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS OF OUR PROGRAM. EMBASSY SHOULD RESPOND TO FURTHER EQUIPMENT REQUESTS -- OTHER THAN THOSE COVERED IN PARAS 3, 5, 6, 7, AND 8 -- BY SAYING THAT BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS MAY DELAY CONSIDERATION OF SUCH ITEMS UNTIL FY 77, BUT THAT WE WOULD INVITE FULLEST POSSIBLE DISCUSSION OF THE GUB'S NEED AND PLANNED UTILIZATION OF SUCH EQUIPMENT, WITH A VIEW TOWARDS ADVANCING THE DELIVERY TIMES OF THE ITEMS. WE SPECIFICALLY STRESSED IN OUR TALKS WITH AUNG HTAY THAT FULL INFORMATION IS NEEDED DUE TO VERY REAL US DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS, AND THE EMBASSY MAY WISH TO CONTINUE TO USE THIS RATIONALE IN THE COURSE OF PRESSING THE BURMESE FOR COMPLETE DATA AND DETAILED PROPOSALS.

13. IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE BURMESE COMMODITY REQUESTS IN A PROPER NCAP FRAMEWORK, THE EMBASSY SHOULD INCLUDE

PROVISION OF F-27, NIGHT VISION DAVICES, HERBICIDES, AND  
BELL 205/LIGHT OBSERVATION HELICOPTER MIX IN ITS  
1976 NCAP SUBMISSION.

14. AS SUGGESTED IN RANGOON 1410, THE HELICOPTER AGREE-  
MENT WOULD HAVE TO BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE A LEGAL BASIS  
FOR OUR TRANSFERRING EQUIPMENT OTHER THAN HELICOPTERS AND  
RELATED ITEMS TO THE BURMESE. YOU MAY WISH TO INFORM  
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THE GUB THAT SUCH AN AMENDMENT, PROBABLY EFFECTED THROUGH  
AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES FOLLOWED BY NECESSARY PROAGS, WILL  
BE REQUIRED. ACTUAL NEGOTIATION OF SUCH AN AMENDMENT  
SHOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL A FINAL NCAP REVIEW OF THE EQUIP-  
MENT IS CONDUCTED AND UNTIL ANY FEEDBACK FROM COL. AUNG  
HTAY'S DISCUSSION WITH HIS SUPERIORS IS RECEIVED.

15. COMMENT: THE BURMESE VISIT CONCLUDED WITH AN  
ELABORATE FILET MIGNON DINNER HOSTED BY COL. AUNG HTAY IN  
THE WASHINGTON HILTON'S HEMISPHERE ROOM. THE RESERVE AND  
CAUTION SO EVIDENT IN THE BURMESE DEALINGS WITH US DURING  
THE PREVIOUS THREE WEEKS DISSOLVED INTO A MOST CORDIAL  
AND JOVIAL HOSPITALITY. THE TRIP THUS ENDED ON A MOST  
PLEASANT AND INFORMAL NOTE. AMBASSADOR VANCE IS  
CURRENTLY ON A SPECIAL MISSION TO AFRICA AND MAY HAVE  
FURTHER OBSERVATIONS UPON HIS RETURN. KISSINXER UNQUOTE.  
INGERSOLL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 26 AUG 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DRUG CONTROL, PERSONNEL TRAINING, POLICIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** buchantr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975STATE174694  
**Document Source:** ADS  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** IO/HDC:EPNOZIGLIA  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** 11652 GDS  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** D750260-0257  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t197507106/baaaaqdp.tel  
**Line Count:** 248  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ORIGIN IO  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** buchantr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 JUN 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <16 OCT 2003 by buchantr>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** n/a  
**TAGS:** SNAR, BM  
**To:** GENEVA  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006